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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [RS](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: U.S. RESPONSE TO THE RUSSIAN EMBASSY ATTACK

REF: MOSCOW 68

Classified By: Political Counselor Margaret Scobey for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (S/ REL TO RUS) Summary: In response to the January 10 attack on the Russian Embassy in Baghdad and the associated Russian request for assistance, MNF-I had roving patrols and an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) monitor the Embassy. End Summary.

Russian Embassy Attacked

12. (C) On the evening of January 10, per reftel, an unknown group of approximately 10 armed men drove up in three cars and attacked the Russian Embassy with small arms fire. The attackers engaged the Iraqi security forces, and after a break, returned 25 minutes later to renew their attack. No Russians were injured, but the embassy sustained extensive damage (Note: the Russian Embassy is located in the Red Zone).

13. (C) At 2055 Counselor Alexander Polipov of the Russian Embassy telephoned the Security Operations Center (SOC). He stated that an attack had occurred, but was not on-going, and requested 4 HUMVEES for static protection. He followed up with an additional call at 0030 the morning of January 11.

U.S. Response

14. (S / REL TO RUS) The SOC telephoned PolMil duty officer and Multinational Corps Iraq (MNC-I) to apprise them of the situation. MNC-I reported that it had not received any other reports in the area, but would see which patrols might be close and would re-route them to investigate. The SOC telephoned the Russian Embassy and explained that MNC-I was in the midst of carrying out their planned operations for the night, and could not guarantee that the forces could divert from these operations to engage in a different movement. However, SOC informed them that would try to get patrols to go through the general area. The SOC did not promise any form of static guard force.

15. (C) The next day, Poloff telephoned the Russian Embassy and spoke with Military Attach and Acting Charg Valerie Pospelov, who complained that the promised static guard force had never arrived.

16. (S / REL TO RUS) In fact, SOC had several patrols move through the area that evening and they reported all was clear. MNC-I also re-routed a returning raid to pass by the Embassy and had the associated "eyes above" monitor the area. Again, all was quiet.

17. (C) After obtaining clearance from SOC to release the information in paragraphs 4 and 6 to the Russians, on January

17 Poloff called back Military Attach Valerie Pospelov and communicated our reaction that evening. Pospelov had not realized that patrols had gone through the neighborhood, expressed appreciation for what we had done, and promised to communicate the information to his Ambassador.

Previous MNF-I Support to the Russian Embassy

18. (C) Five days before the January 10 incident, on January 5, Russian Counselor A. Polipov had telephoned PolMil officer to request MNF-I protection for the Embassy's two day celebration starting January 6. Despite the short notice, SOC worked with MNF-I to re-program existing operations to allow for extra neighborhood security and extra combat patrols. MNF-I also made available a quick reaction force. This effort required MNF-I to change two days of planned operations to meet the Russian request.
KHALILZAD